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Harry Potter and the Duality between Good and Evil

While most readers view good and evil as opposing forces, we often see that they are mutually constitutive and therefore co-dependent. Even in cases of fiction where initially, one cannot imagine that there are connections between protagonists and antagonists, the line between the opposing forces often becomes indistinct. Characters that appear as good begin to question themselves and their decisions, while those we deem evil begin to look less ominous. This concept of “two parts of a whole” is essential when considering that the opposing forces wage war with each other and are consumed with the other party’s existence. In such cases, the one cannot truly exist without the other despite their defining efforts to destroy each other. In J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series, this mutual dependence occurs between the characters of Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort. Harry and Voldemort develop a mutually dependent relationship, becoming obsessed with each other’s existence. More often than not, their ability to offset each other’s similarities reaffirms their connection. While they oppose each other, Harry and Voldemort share links that neither can control and that, according to a mysterious prophesy, means that only one can live. Rowling illustrates, through the relationship between Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort, the duality that can occur in a series whose main theme is the battle of good versus evil, hero versus villain. The nature of good and evil is mutually dependent, as is Harry’s relationship with Voldemort allowing for the existence of one to define the existence of the other.

Once each character is introduced, the division and connection of Harry and Voldemort works to illustrate their duality. The duality, a driving issue of the series, would not be a factor without the actions of Voldemort. Had Harry’s parents not been

Voldemort's target, Harry would have probably grown up more like his father, James—haughty, talented, proud—and have less of a reason to prove himself. Harry would have grown up as a member of the Wizarding World, but never as a celebrity or hero. Because of Voldemort's actions taken against Lily and James Potter, Harry consistently acts to thwart Voldemort's efforts to regain and then spread his powers. As the series continues, Harry's decisions indicate an awareness of his connection to an evil force. Voldemort makes selfish, destructive choices and is motivated by his own personal interests while Harry's choices reflect his selflessness and his ability to put others first. Given the opportunity, Harry could have chosen the Dark Arts and, like Voldemort, turn his back on those he has come to love, but he never does. Harry always considers others before he acts and, as a result, is a target for Voldemort's wrath.

One question that arises when analyzing the theme of good and evil in the *Harry Potter* series is: how to define what is truly good and truly evil? Are there universal indicators behind, within, or consequent upon an action by which one can determine whether acts are good or evil? How can we identify whether one person is truly good or evil? Theodore A. Turnau, III, in the article "Inflecting the World: Popular Culture and the Perception of Evil," writes, "When we spot evil, it is always by means of a mediated gaze, as through a reflecting telescope" (384). When we observe evil, using Turnau's metaphor of a reflecting telescope, we view it through several lenses, larger, and in focus. The image appears adjusted to suit our own needs and with much of what we want it to appear as infused in the image. For Voldemort and Harry, what one character observes, depending on his own "moral compass," might not be the same as what the other observes. This reflects back to the idea of good and evil as mutually constitutive—

without Voldemort's actions, Harry would not be Harry—the hero needs the villain in order to be heroic. Voldemort's moral compass permits him to make what he believes are appropriate choices while Harry's moral standards point him in another direction. Their childhoods paralleled each other, as both Harry and Voldemort matured with little parental guidance, but although their beginnings are comparable, their contradictory decisions lead them down opposite paths. Harry, at the hands of the Dursleys, and Voldemort, in an orphanage, emerge with dissimilar motivations for utilizing their power. However, it is this “mediated gaze,” as mentioned by Turnau, that accounts for much of the action that occurs. They are raised with similarly bleak circumstances, with one exception: Lily's sister Petunia's love for her sister sealed a magical protection for Harry. Petunia may not love Harry, but she did love Lily. In the orphanage, the future Lord Voldemort, Tom Riddle, grew up without experiencing love or understanding the purpose of love, and he found destructive and self-aggrandizing outlets for his burgeoning magical powers.

In the *Harry Potter* series, the battle between good and evil for control of the Wizarding World is a continuous cycle with each side struggling for power over the other. This struggle often involves a series of challenges where one side emerges victorious if only for enough time to allow the losing side time to plan a counterattack. It is through these challenges that Harry and his friends and allies take on the burdens of heroism to opposed Voldemort and his Death Eaters. Such roles are not filled by stereotypical hero—boastful, brave, secure in his power—but can be the development for the reluctant hero—a hero that has his role thrust upon him by elements beyond his control. Joseph Campbell, in *The Power of Myth*, writes about the events that occur as a

hero undertakes a journey. These events mirror Harry's life and connect to the challenges he himself faces. Campbell breaks down the journey of the hero into eight categories, each of which correlate with an event in Harry's life,

1. A hero gives his or her life to something bigger than one does, to some higher end.
2. A hero performs a courageous act either physical or spiritual.
3. A hero is usually someone from whom something has been taken or who feels there's something lacking in the normal experience available or permitted to members of his society.
4. A hero embarks on a series of adventures to recover what is lost or to discover some life-giving information.
5. The hero usually moves out of the known, conventional safety of his own life to undertake the journey.
6. The hero undergoes trials and tests to see if he has the knowledge and the capacity to survive.
7. A hero has to achieve something.
8. A hero's journey usually consists of a departure, a fulfillment, and a return. (151-152).

There is no one item in Campbell's list that encompasses the ideal hero. For Harry Potter, it is a combination of events as well as knowledge gained along the way that defines him as a hero.

In the *Harry Potter* series, J.K. Rowling establishes Harry as the reluctant hero by clearly developing his past connections to evil and the potential for the future challenge

of facing and defeating evil. Harry's journey as a hero mirrors the qualities as outlined by Campbell. Initially Harry is unaware of his role in defeating the evil of Lord Voldemort. He is an orphan, raised in the Muggle world by the Dursley family. When we first encounter him, Harry Potter is, according to Mary Pharr in her article "In Medias Res: Harry Potter as Hero-In-Progress," a "hero whose story is in progress" (54). Harry begins his story without the knowledge that he has to take on the role of a hero or that it comes to him through actions taken by his parents, James and Lily Potter. Pharr writes, "Oftentimes, for a hero, that beginning lies within one's heritage" (54). James and Lily Potter heroically fought Lord Voldemort but were not able to withstand his power. Before her death, Lily Potter utilized her ability to love to protect her son from Voldemort. As she sacrificed herself to save her son, she established an unbreakable connection between young Harry and Lord Voldemort. Pharr explains, "Lily's ancient female magic preserved her son for future greatness even as it also badly damaged Voldemort by destroying his body—thus giving the world time to rest and recuperate in the endless war of good against evil (55). Harry's first encounter with evil comes at an early age and sets the stage for the subsequent battles that follow.

The central issue in the relationship between Harry and Voldemort focuses on a partially overheard prophecy. Snape, acting out of jealousy and spite, reported to Voldemort only that a child born "to those who have thrice defied him, born as the seventh month dies" will defeat him (OOTP 841). Voldemort does not know directly whom the prophecy relates to, and acts without complete knowledge of the specifics. His choice creates his greatest enemy and the one who can bring about his destruction. In their first encounter, Voldemort seeks to destroy Harry but is not able to because of

Harry's mother, Lily, and the sacrifice of her life for her son. Rowling's narrative suggests that Voldemort's power cannot prevail over the power of love, specifically a mother's love. More importantly, Voldemort's defeat in his attempt on Harry's life unknowingly results in an unexpected connection—the creation of his own worst enemy and the means to his own destruction. This early encounter with Voldemort is the type of event Campbell mentions in the third point on his list. Harry lost his parents because of a less than normal experience that resulted in a less than normal childhood for Harry. As a child, Harry did not know the truth about his parent's violent deaths nor was he informed of the special powers he possesses. Until it is time for him to leave childhood behind and begin his magical training, he experiences a less than normal childhood while living in the Dursleys' household. Harry's childhood encounter with violence, the secrecy surrounding his parent's demise, and his unstable home-life, fit into Campbell's description of the hero's journey.

Each book in the *Harry Potter* series begins with travel to a specific destination. Pharr notes, as does Campbell, "most heroes journey as a part of their development" (58). Whether to the zoo (in Book One), the Burrow (in Book Three), or to a meeting of the Order of the Phoenix (in Book Five), Harry cannot develop to his full potential and challenge his opposition without leaving the Dursley household. Regardless of any diversions along the way, the majority of Harry's journeys end up at Hogwarts. The education Harry receives at Hogwarts provided him with the chance to learn the scope of his powers and gave him a sense of belonging. Likewise, Hogwarts was also a special place for Voldemort. While in attendance, Voldemort solidified his alliance with the dark side as he sought a way to achieve immortality. While education at Hogwarts offers

Harry the option to utilize his powers for good, Voldemort was able to develop his powers of the Dark Arts. Even as the education Harry received at Hogwarts prepared him to face evil through a series of, "tests: some academic, some practical, and some moral," the education Voldemort received at Hogwarts made it possible for him to become ultimate evil and to become one of the great Dark Wizards of all time (Pharr 58). Both boys make vastly different choices as they become skilled in their craft. Voldemort sought to achieve immortality and kills as a response to his fear of death. Harry rejects killing, choosing not to follow the path of evil but to place himself in situations to overcome evil even if the result could potentially mean his own death. Through the choices each makes, they become solidly aligned with the side of their choice.

Pharr continues in her article to explain Harry's choice to fight evil, "Choosing to fight evil requires as much faith as strength—and with no guarantee of victory. All heroes must face both the temptation of evil and the prospect of defeat, possibly death" (63). Harry chooses to fight evil while Voldemort chooses an alternate path, reiterating the fact that choices are vital in defining each character's actions. Both characters have a choice and both must deal with the consequences of their choices. Though young, Harry chooses to face the challenges caused by his parent's actions and deal with them as an adult. Harry has no established knowledge and no control over the evil brought on by Lord Voldemort. His education at Hogwarts and the development of his magical power prepare him to enter into a battle with evil forces. The climactic moment in most of the books in the series occurs when Harry faces Voldemort or one of his servants. For example, in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Harry comes face to face with a memory of Tom Riddle and realizes the pain and madness that exist underneath the

school. The experience of finding unhappiness at Hogwarts is unfamiliar to Harry who views Hogwarts as the embodiment of marvels and magic. Nonetheless, Harry faces the memory of Tom Riddle and prevails. Each time Harry's powers are tested and each time he succeeds, Voldemort becomes more consumed with destroying Harry. Conversely, as Harry overcomes each challenge, he becomes increasingly strong and confident of his power. Harry meets each challenge and passes each test. In taking on this challenge in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Harry comes face to face with the possibility that Quirrell, a willing subject of Voldemort's, will kill him,

Quirrell snapped his fingers. Ropes sprang out of thin air and wrapped themselves tightly around Harry.

“You're too nosy to live, Potter. Scurrying around the school on Halloween like that, for all I knew you'd seen me coming to look at what was guarding the Stone.” (SS 359)

In each novel, Harry willingly accepts that he might die to save others, just as his mother and father did and just as Voldemort never could. Voldemort, as the villain, continually tortures and kills others to save himself. Harry is willing to die for his cause and his friends in each work, but he stands and fights Voldemort to defend and advance both. Pharr illustrates this point,

Harry is not a hero simply because his parents were heroes; heritage is a crucial starting point but never an end unto itself. Rather, Harry is a hero simply because he is willing to engage in the defense if all that is constructively human. To turn that willingness into action, he has to find

the right education, and in the environment of Hogwarts, Harry has the time and space, the mentors and equipment to make the transition (65). Harry is willing to face death—he accepts it—and through acceptance is able to survive. Through his journeys and challenges, Harry develops in his role as a hero and acquires training in preparation to challenge Lord Voldemort. His growth is evident because of his willingness to die for the people he loves—just as his parents did for him. As the series progresses, this defining trait of Harry's develops as does his ability to make choices that place him on the side of the good.

In the introduction to "The Hero in Popular Stories," Will Wright explains, "The hero is the necessary intervener, the instigator of actions that bring about change, whether through dominant control or through confused interference" (146). Harry reiterates this fact in *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* when he stops Sirius and Lupin from executing Peter Pettigrew, the traitor who gave Voldemort the secret to James and Lily Potter's whereabouts. Harry tells Pettigrew, "I'm not doing this for you! I am doing it because—I don't reckon my dad would've wanted them to become killers—just for you" (*Azkaban* 376). It is Harry who permits Wormtail to return to his master, allowing him the opportunity to play a significant role in Voldemort's "physical resurrection" (64). Harry intervenes on behalf of Pettigrew and allows him to return to Voldemort, which in turn allows Voldemort to return to full corporeality. Chantel Lavoie, in her article, "Safe as Houses: Sorting and School Houses at Hogwarts," explains that Harry has formed another connection with Voldemort by saving Peter Pettigrew's life, "Harry wants no such bond, yet, as Dumbledore explains, this inexplicable tie is the most profound type of magic" (39). The connection between Harry and Voldemort is evident in the circular

pattern of life and death, good and evil, and their choices along the course of the narrative. Like Shakespeare's MacBeth, who begins a murderous path towards self-destruction upon hearing the Weird Sisters' prophecy, Voldemort chose to murder Harry's parents, creating in Harry his own worst enemy who has the ability to cause his own destruction. Voldemort's choice created a connection to Harry that would have never existed had he not chosen the option of murder. Conversely, Harry's mercy for the life of Peter Pettigrew allows Pettigrew to return to Voldemort and assist in Voldemort's return to complete form. Voldemort chose murder and Harry chose life; both choices created great power that only exists because of their decisions.

In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Harry experiences the reality of death and the presence of evil as Voldemort kills Cedric Diggory in an attempt to regain his full physical form. Sharon Black, in "The Magic of Harry Potter: Symbols and Heroes of Fantasy," writes, "Harry faces physical and mental torture by the now-restored Voldemort, but at this time, as a maturing hero, he is ready to resist it. His return from the encounter with Voldemort is...life enhancing" (243). Voldemort, through his efforts to save himself from death, prompts Harry to fight with as much strength as he can muster as a young wizard; he represents the evil presence that Black describes. After witnessing the death of Cedric, having his blood used to restore Voldemort to full power, and after witnessing the battle between the two wands, Harry takes on a determined role to side against Voldemort, but not through a desire for fame or immortality. Rather, as Harry explains in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, he rejects being famous and hates the connection that Voldemort established the night he murdered Harry's parents,

“I didn’t ask—I didn’t want—*Voldemort killed my parents!*” Harry spluttered. “I got famous because he murdered my family but couldn’t kill me! Who wants to be famous for that? Don’t then think I’d rather it never—” (OOTP 74)

Though they both have the option of choice, Harry observes first-hand the effect of the evil choices Voldemort has made. He suffers because of the loss of his parents and does not want to be anything like Voldemort. Though capable of similar degrees of power, Harry does not choose to use his power for evil—in this instance, murder. Harry has suffered great loss because of the evil Voldemort represents. Voldemort, on the other hand, finds what he believes is strength and power through the Dark Arts and utilizes them for dominance and survival. Harry rejects the Dark Arts because of their association with Voldemort and becomes a more powerful wizard because of this choice; he is motivated exclusively because of their association with Voldemort.

Though evil, Voldemort ironically holds Harry’s interest as he becomes aware the he is the one who can possibly defeat the Dark Lord. M. Katherine Grimes, in “Harry Potter: Fairy Tale Prince, Real Boy, and Archetypal Hero,” reinforces the image of Harry as the hero that must battle dark forces: “The relationship of good to evil is perhaps the most fundamental question ...Voldemort represents the evil king in the archetypal heroic tale ...Voldemort is apparently neither the boy’s father nor his grandfather, but an evil person with power who fears losing that power to another and thus attempts to kill the usurper in childhood” (91, 113). Throughout the series, the bond between Harry and Voldemort becomes the focus for each character.

One of the first examples of their connection appears in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* when Harry visits Mr. Ollivander to purchase his wand. Harry tries several wands before he finds his wand—a perfect fit,

Mr. Ollivander fixed Harry with his pale stare.

“I remember every wand I’ve ever sold, Mr. Potter. Every single wand. It so happened that the phoenix whose tail feather is in your wand, gave another feather—just one other. It is very curious indeed that you should be destined for this wand when its brother—why, its brother gave you that scar.”

Harry swallowed.

“Yes, thirteen-and-a-half inches. Yew. Curious indeed how these things happen. The wand chooses the wizards, remember...I think we must expect great things from you, Mr. Potter...After all, He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named did great things—terrible, yes, but great. (SS 106)

Lord Voldemort’s actions with his wand exhibited great skill and created great fear in those who did not pledge their allegiance. Harry’s wand is the opposite. As the series progresses, each novel complicates and deepens Harry and Voldemort’s defining connections. Their similar wands, shared blood, as well as “Voldemort’s failed attempt to kill the boy also binds them” (Grimes 113). The example from the text that Grimes uses to illustrate this point is the duel in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. In the climactic scene, Voldemort plans to kill Harry but decides to play with him instead of killing him immediately. As the two forces clash, the connection between them is made evident by the interaction of their spells:

A jet of green light issued from Voldemort's wand just as a jet of red light blasted from Harry's—they met in midair—and suddenly Harry's wand was vibrating as though an electric charge were surging through it; his hand seized up around it; he couldn't have released it if he'd wanted to—and a narrow beam of light connected the two wands, neither red not green, but bright, deep gold. Harry, following the beam with his astonished gaze, saw that Voldemort's long, white fingers too were gripping a wand that was shaking and vibrating. (GOF 663)

Harry does not believe that he will be able to control the powerful connection until he begins to see the events that follow,

The golden thread connecting Harry and Voldemort splintered; through the wands remained connected, a thousand more beams arced high over Harry and Voldemort, crisscrossing all around them, until they were enclosed in a golden, dome-shaped web... (GOF 663)

The connection between the two wands, each containing a feather from Dumbledore's phoenix, Fawkes, allows Harry the chance to defeat Voldemort. Once Lord Voldemort realizes that his wand will not defeat its "brother wand," he sets out on a journey to find a more powerful wand capable of defeating Harry's, not realizing that this quest will ultimately give Harry mastery over the Elder Wand Voldemort seeks.

In their first encounter at the Potter home in Godric's Hollow, Voldemort seals his fate when he chooses to attack Harry and his parents, infusing a portion of his soul into the infant. Because of the initial meeting, the connection between Harry and Voldemort grows as each becomes fixated with the other's actions. At their climactic meeting in

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, it appears as though Voldemort has met his equal. Grimes goes on to write, "The two beams from the wands of Voldemort and Harry Potter combine both to repel each other and to bind the enemies in a golden web that can transport them and even raise the dead, if only temporarily. Good and evil both attract and repel one another, and good wins, again if only temporarily" (113-114). Voldemort's actions continually force Harry to embody the qualities of the hero, but in doing so, Harry performs actions that parallel those of Voldemort's as he continually defends himself against the Dark Lord. Grimes illustrates Harry's journey as a hero through the trials he faces, "Like other archetypal heroes, he sometimes asks to be relived of his tasks, often denying the warning of his aching scar, hoping, like Oedipus, that if he ignores the warning he can avoid the risk" (117). It is not only Harry's courage or his actions that make him a hero. His actions are usually self-sacrificing—acting on instinct regardless of the potential cost—while Voldemort's are self-centered. Voldemort's quest to regain his full power and to return as the Lord of the Dark Arts places no one before the ultimate task of destroying Harry. Harry's decisions to face each challenge head on without the certainty of victory that affords him the title of a hero, while labeling Voldemort with the title of villain.

The duality between good and evil "is further emphasized in the curious similarities between Harry and Voldemort. Dark magic is obviously a hidden magic, and Lord Voldemort is very much the father of lies" (Lavoie 42). When attempting to separate or isolate good from evil, one or the other remains in the distant but not too far background. From his defeat when Harry is an infant until his return is acknowledged after the incident at the Ministry in Book 5, Voldemort's power, while believed

extinguished, remains hidden, lying in wait as if preparing to strike when the moment arrives. Though he is not always in the forefront, those who seek to prevent his return to power feel Voldemort's presence. Though not as willing to act on his potential abilities for the Dark Arts, Harry discovers the potential evil residing within his own personality. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* Harry nearly loses control and attacks Dumbledore,

“You do care,” said Dumbledore. He had not flinched or made a single move to stop Harry from demolishing his office. His expression was calm, almost detached. “You care so much you feel as though you will bleed to death with the pain of it.”

“I—DON’T!” Harry screamed, so loudly that he felt his throat might tear, and for a second he wanted to rush at Dumbledore and break him too; shatter that calm old face, shake him, hurt him, make him feel some tiny part of the horror inside Harry. (OOTP 824)

Throughout Harry's adventures, journeys, and challenges since discovering his ability for magic, Dumbledore has acted as a teacher and friend. The realization that Harry has when he considers trying to harm Dumbledore is alarming. Harry, like Voldemort, has the ability to perform evil but chooses to withstand the urge not matter how influenced by pain, anger, or frustration. Amanda Cockrell, in “Harry Potter and the Secret Password: Finding Our Way in the Magical Genre,” asserts that “good does not always win in Harry Potter's world” (16). Harry is aware of this and as he chooses to take on the challenge after challenge, he develops an awareness that he might not prevail. An example of this

appears in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. In this particular book, Voldemort has regained most of his physical power and orders the death of Cedric Diggory,

A swishing noise and a second voice, which screeched the words to the night: "Avada Kedavra!" A blast of green light blazed through Harry's eyelids, and he heard something heavy fall to the ground beside him; the pain in his scar reached such a pitch that he retched, and then it diminished; terrified of what he was about to see, he opened his stinging eyes. Cedric was lying spread-eagle on the ground beside him.

He was dead. (GOF 638)

In this passage, Harry was unable to use his powers to stop the senseless murder. Though he escapes with the Cup, Cedric's body, and his own life, he is unable to stop Voldemort's return to full strength. He is also unable to stop the murder of Cedric, solidifying in his mind through experience the reality that good does not always prevail.

Expanding on the idea of good not always succeeding over evil, Cockrell describes the challenges Harry faces as a struggle "about the monsters within and without the self" (18). Because of Lily's protection of Harry, when Lord Voldemort was hit by the reflected *Avada Kedavra* curse, a portion of Voldemort's soul resides in Harry, representative of Harry's inner monster and the unifying link between the two. Harry Potter is conscious of his role but does not accept the connection that it gives him to Voldemort. Harry seeks to destroy Voldemort and by doing so destroy the part of him that exists within himself. Unless this link is broken, Harry's soul will never completely be free of Voldemort's evil. The establishment of their connection began because of Voldemort's interpretation of Professor Trelawney's prophecy and his decision that

Harry was the one who would bring about his defeat. Voldemort's attempt on Harry's life backfired when Harry did not die, causing Voldemort to inadvertently "mark him as his equal" (OOTP 841). When he is older, Harry consciously attempts to ignore and even deny the signs of their unrelenting link. In his journey to overcome evil, Harry seeks to defeat Voldemort, but does not want to intensify their connection. In the Sorting Ceremony, Harry made a conscious choice not to become a member of the Slytherin House, even though the Sorting Hat initially suggested to Harry the possibility of placement in the House of the young Voldemort,

"Hmmm," said a small voice in his ear. "Difficult. Very difficult. Plenty of courage, I see. Not a bad mind either. There's talent, oh my goodness, yes—and a nice thirst to prove yourself, now that's interesting... So where shall I put you?"

Harry gripped the edges of the stool and thought, *Not Slytherin, not Slytherin.*

"Not Slytherin, eh?" said the small voice. "Are you sure? You could be great, you know, it's all here in your head, and Slytherin will help you on the way to greatness, no doubt about that—no? Well, if you're sure—better be GRYFFINDOR!" (SS 151)

The sorting initially wanted to place Harry in Slytherin, the House to which Voldemort once belonged. Hagrid, who declares that all the dark wizards come from Slytherin, fuels Harry's decided plea to avoid placement in Slytherin. Early in the series, Hagrid explains the various Wizarding Houses to Harry, and warns him specifically of Slytherin House, stating that, "There's not a single witch or wizard who went bad who wasn't in Slytherin.

You-Know-Who was one" (SS 99). Hagrid's warning resonates with Harry who now knows about Voldemort and his parent's demise. His choice indicates a deliberate act to distance himself from any link to Voldemort. In *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Harry references the scar Voldemort inflicted upon him and the symbolic nature of the occasional pain Harry experiences,

Harry went restlessly back to the bed and sat down on it, running a finger over his scar again. It wasn't the pain that bothered him; Harry was no stranger to pain and injury...No, the thing that was bothering Harry was that the last time his scar had hurt him, it had been because Voldemort had been close by...But Voldemort couldn't be here, now...The idea of Voldemort lurking in Privet Drive was absurd, impossible...(GOF 18-19)

The lightening-bolt scar that Harry carries is a reminder of the day he lost his parents and only pains Harry when Voldemort is near. In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, it is Harry's scar that reacts to Voldemort in the final confrontation of the book,

And then Harry's scar burst open. He knew he was dead: it was pain beyond imagining, pain past endurance—

He was gone from the hall, he was locked in the coils of a creature with red eyes, so tightly bound that Harry did now know where his body ended and the creature's began. They were fused together, bound by pain, and there was no escape— (OOTP 815-186)

Voldemort's power, as he attempted to destroy Harry, reflected back to destroying his physical self and leaving Harry with powers beyond the typical powers of a wizard his age. Cockrell explains, "Harry retains the mark of the experience, a lightening-shaped

scar on his forehead, and an unconscious facility with magic that is beyond his years and may somehow have been imparted by Voldemort" (20). Voldemort did not intend to create a bond of this magnitude. He acted selfishly in his decision to murder Harry who he believed to be the one who stood in the way of his immortality. Once Harry realizes his unbreakable connection to Voldemort, he has difficulty accepting that he is capable of making decisions that could mirror the Dark Lord's. Cockrell explains, "Voldemort is Harry's shadow side, his dark twin, and Harry must meet and defeat him" (20). She goes on to explain this theory using an excerpt from *The Language of the Night*, by Ursula K. LeGuinn,

The shadow is the other side of our psyche, the dark brother of the conscious mind. It is Cain, Caliban, Frankenstein's monster, Mr. Hyde. It is Vergil, who guided Dante through hell, Gilgamesh's friend Enkidu, Frodo's enemy Gollum... The shadow stands on the threshold between the conscious and the unconscious mind, and we meet it in our dreams, as sister, brother, friend, beast, monster, enemy, guide. It is all we don't want to, can't admit into our conscious self, all the qualities and tendencies within us which have been repressed, denied, or not used... Jung himself said, "Everyone carries a shadow, and the less it is embodied in the individual's conscious life, the blacker and denser it is." The less you look at it, in other words, the stronger it grows, until it can become a menace, an intolerable load, a threat within the soul. (Cockrell 21)

Cockrell cites LeGuinn on the evil that comes with the adolescent self and the need to face the shadow as a way to overcome:

The adolescent shadow often appears as much blacker, more wholly evil than it is. The only way for the youngster to get past the paralyzing self-blame and self-disgust of this stage is to really look at the shadow, to face it, warts and fangs, and pimples and claws and all—to accept it as the self—as *part* of the self. The ugliest part, but not the weakest. For the shadow is the guide. The guide inward and out again; downward and up again; there, as Bilbo the Hobbit said, and back again. The guide of the journey of self-knowledge, to adulthood, to the light. (Cockrell 22)

Harry and Voldemort, as the self and the shadow, rely on each other's existence to act as a catalyst for self-identification. Harry progresses on his journey with the desire to confront Voldemort while at the same time becoming aware of his powers. In contrast, Voldemort must "defeat Harry if he is to regain his powers, if the shadow is to subdue the Self" (Cockrell 21). Throughout the series, each confrontation between Harry and Voldemort reaffirms their interconnectedness and displays their duality. Again, looking at the confrontation between Harry and Voldemort in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, Voldemort regains his power by acquiring Harry's blood. Cockrell writes, "As a result, just as Voldemort is in some sense Harry's father, having inadvertently bestowed on him his extraordinary powers, Harry is Voldemort's in the unwilling gift of blood" (21). At this point in the story, there is no question of their link. The knowledge Harry acquires in the final confrontation scene in *Goblet of Fire* sets the tone for the last three novels. Harry—unsure of how this new realization will affect his future and suffering the

shock of Cedric's death—struggles with this connection as he continues to understand his role in defeating evil.

Though not receptive of his link to evil, Harry finds that he is better able to understand Voldemort by dealing with his connection and carrying out a plan of defeat. Once Harry becomes fully aware of his role, he can use his position to his benefit. Cockrell remarks,

Harry is the wounded hero whose wound gives him a power he wouldn't otherwise have, a power that may have come indeed from the brush with the dark force that wounded him. It is duality that gives the Harry Potter books their power: a duality both of Voldemort and Harry, of dark and light forces, and of tone, of dark and light storytelling alternating, ranging from the dark retelling of the Lucifer legend with Voldemort as the fallen angel to the whimsical inventions of Rowling's magical world. (22)

Harry, and Voldemort, must face his opposite to settle whose force is the stronger. Harry opts to face Voldemort numerous times seeking revenge for the murder of his parents. Though he could simply choose to avoid confrontation, he chooses to face it head on; without facing Voldemort's challenges, he cannot be truly free. It is his role as a hero and his fate because of the connection established when he was an infant. As Maria Nikolajeva, in "Harry Potter-A Return to the Romantic Hero" explains, "By the fourth volume, Harry has learned that one cannot flee from the Shadow, but must meet it face to face. That is the fate of romantic heroes" (138). Harry can attempt to ignore the pains his scar gives him or the visions he has from Voldemort's point of view, but he chooses to control his outcome—instead of avoiding a confrontation, Harry places himself in

position to take Voldemort's challenge. Harry's fate will be to face Voldemort while also facing his own potential for evil.

Harry, in his second year, encounters the memory of Tim Riddle, the Heir of Slytherin. The memory of Riddle, as Rowling writes, ponders the similarities between Harry and himself: they are both "half-bloods, orphans, raised by Muggles. Probably the only two Parselmouths to come to Hogwarts since the great Slytherin himself. We even look something alike..." (COS 317). Three years later, Voldemort realizes his need for Harry's blood to regain his strength and explains the spell that restores Voldemort to life but also tightens their bond:

"My father's bone, naturally, meant that we would have to come here, where he was buried. But the blood of a foe... Wormtail would have had me use any wizard, would you not, Wormtail? Any wizard who hated me...as so many of them still do. But I knew the one I must use, if I was to rise again, more powerful than I had been when I had fallen. I wanted Harry Potter's blood. I wanted the blood of the one who had stripped me of power thirteen years ago...for the lingering protection his mother once gave him would reside in my veins too..." (GOF 656-657)

As Voldemort focuses solely on their similarities, he is not able to recognize their fundamental differences; his evil core will not allow him to recognize the "conscious decision not to become another Heir of Slytherin...Voldemort cannot conceive of strength derived from the refusal to dominate by power" (Pharr 64). Voldemort focuses on power and seeks to regain ultimate power over everyone who resists his return. By using Harry's blood to regain full power, he ties himself to Harry as short-term protection

and does not bother to understand the consequences of their shared blood. Voldemort's self-interested act—to link himself with Harry through blood—involuntarily becomes protection for Harry and a weakness for Voldemort.

Rebecca Stephens, in her article, "Harry and Hierarchy: Book Banning as a Reaction to the Subversion of Authority," writes, "it is the lack of unity, and not the absence or flouting of rules, that defeats evil in the stories" (58). Unlike Voldemort, Harry does not envision himself as the one main source of power. He is able to defeat Voldemort using not only his power but also the powers of his friends. Harry depends upon the strength of his friends while Voldemort has no friends. In Harry's sixth year, Dumbledore explains this to Harry upon their return from the Pensieve, "You will hear many of his Death Eaters claiming that they are in his confidences, that they alone are close to him, even understand him. They are deluded. Lord Voldemort has never had a friend, nor do I believe that he has ever wanted one" (HBP 276). Dumbledore explains Voldemort's lack of close friends as a personal preference—he needs no one and wants no one. Voldemort uses the Death Eater's desire for his support against them while Harry depends on his friends for support. An example of Harry employing his friends' assistance is illustrated in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* when Harry uses Ron's ability to play chess and Hermione's ability to solve riddles. Without his two friends, he would never have made it to the final confrontation. Throughout the series, Rowling continually creates multifaceted climactic challenges in which Harry can enlist the assistance of his friends. In addition to Ron and Hermione, Harry also obtains assistance and vital information from Neville and Dobby. Neville, in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, assists Harry by destroying the seventh Horcrux, Voldemort's snake, Nagini.

Dobby, out of concern for Harry's safety, tries to keep him from returning to Hogwarts in *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, and acts as a spy for Harry in *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*. Harry's friends provide him with support, as well as information necessary to progress to an outcome. Harry's need for his friends is evident when he realizes the necessity of destroying the seven Horcruxes, a hidden portion of a Dark Wizard's soul, in order to maintain his life. Once they are destroyed, Voldemort cannot live indefinitely. Though Harry does destroy one, Tom Riddle's Diary, Hermione, Ron, Neville and Dumbledore play a part in the destruction of four others. Harry realizes the importance of his friends as he journeys through the series. He is capable of extraordinary power, but is with the aid of his friends that he makes it through many of the challenges placed upon him. Harry unites people and sees friendship as a source of power while Voldemort divides and conquers and sees friendship as a weakness.

Even with the support of his friends, there are often times when he would rather not be the focus of all the attention. Unlike Voldemort, Harry does not seek fame and immortality and often wishes to avoid the spotlight. An example of this appears in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. Harry and Ron get into a disagreement, and Hermione tries to explain, though to no avail. Ron becomes jealous of the fact that Harry receives most of the attention while he, the last of five Weasley boys, fights to get any notice at all.

"Great," said Harry bitterly. "Really great. Tell him from me I'll swap any time he wants. Tell him from me he's welcome to it...People gawping at my forehead wherever I go..." (GOF 290).

Later in the text, Harry confronts Ron directly and indicates his frustration and having to deal with his connection to Voldemort on his own,

“There you go,” Harry said. “Something for you to wear on Tuesday. You might even have a scar now, if you’re lucky... That’s what you want, isn’t it?” (GOF 335-336).

The attention placed on Harry and the emphasis of his connection to Voldemort begins to wear on Harry’s temperament. He does not seek celebrity, but finds it placed on him purely by his survival of Voldemort’s attempt on his life. Voldemort has no friends, only servants while Harry has the love and support of his friends—thought at times strained support—representing opposite sides because their choices. Harry has taken on the role of the hero marked by the Dark Lord and has made it through various deadly challenges, but also realizes the importance of his friends and his need for their support.

Another example of Harry defeating evil appears in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. In this example, Harry does not rely solely on his own powers and accepts assistance from others who have an interest in Voldemort’s defeat. As Harry struggles to overpower Voldemort, the ghosts of Voldemort’s victims come to Harry’s aid,

“NOW!” Harry yelled; he didn’t think that he could have held on for another moment anyway—he pulled his wand upward with an almighty wrench, and the golden thread broke; the cage of light vanished, the phoenix song died—but the shadowy figures of Voldemort’s victims did not disappear—they were closing in upon Voldemort, shielding Harry from his gaze. (GOF 668)

Voldemort's enemies aid Harry's narrow escape. Stephens continues to indicate their connection by commenting, "In this scene, even Harry's wand is dependent on Voldemort's because its power to vanquish lies in the fact that their two wands share the same core" (58). Without Voldemort's wand, Harry would have not been able to employ the assistance of those murdered by Voldemort. He comes face to face with not only Cedric, but also his parents who assist him in escaping from Voldemort. Though antagonists, Harry cannot escape without the power from Voldemort's wand. This further illustrates the mutually constitutive nature of good and evil, Harry and Voldemort.

Harry's connection to Voldemort is evident in his ability to speak his name aloud while others refer to him as "He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named." In "The Civic Leadership of Harry Potter: Agency, Ritual, and Schooling," Rebecca Skulnick and Jessee Goodman suggest, "Harry's ability to call Voldemort by his name is supported and explained by his mentor, Dumbledore" (272). Skulnick and Goodman refer to Dumbledore's advice to Harry in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*,

"Sir?" said Harry. "I've been thinking...Sir—even if the Stone's gone, Vol-, I mean, You-Know-Who—"

"Call him Voldemort, Harry. Always use the proper name for things.

Fear of a name increases fear of the thing itself." (SS 370)

Dumbledore emphasizes to Harry the importance of speaking Voldemort's name aloud, an act that for others causes near physical pain but for Harry comes with ease. Harry's ability to speak Voldemort's name aloud indicates his lack of fear. By the end of Book 7, both Harry and Dumbledore refer to Voldemort as Tom Riddle. They no longer use his chosen name, angering Voldemort who hates the ordinary, muggle name. By referring to

Dumbledore as Tom Riddle, Harry and Dumbledore refuse to abide by Voldemort's rules. Repeating Voldemort's name is easy for Harry and is as though the two are familiar to each other yet remain mortal enemies. Unlike the others, Harry is able to see Voldemort's beginning through his encounters with Tom Riddle. In *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, Harry and Dumbledore go through the Pensieve to observe Dumbledore's memory of Voldemort's beginnings. Harry observes this encounter with great interest as it allows him to experience Voldemort before he becomes obsessed with evil to the benefit of himself. Harry is also able to see the similarities between their early upbringings. Both of their lives before Hogwarts echo shared emptiness and feelings of isolation. Like Harry, Voldemort possesses powers he is unsure of, but unlike Harry, he uses them to terrorize others. As Dumbledore describes Hogwarts, Tom Riddle echoes some of the same feelings as Harry expressed when he found out about the school,

"What is it that you can do?"

"All sorts," breathed Riddle. A flush of excitement was rising up his neck into his hollow cheeks; he looked fevered. "I can make things move without touching them. I can make animals do what I want them to do. I can make bad things happen to people who annoy me. I can make them hurt if I want to."

His legs were trembling. He stumbled forward and sat down on the bed again, staring at his hands, his head bowed as though in prayer.

"I knew I was different," he whispered to his own quivering fingers. "I knew I was special. Always, I knew there was something." (HBP 270-271)

Voldemort's powers thrill him and give him a sense of something special while Harry does not want to be special or have special powers—he does not like the strange things he does and merely wants to fit in. When Harry first learns of his connection to the Wizarding World, he is, like Voldemort, surprised, but does not believe himself capable of the things Hagrid describes, ““Hagrid,” he said quietly, “I think you must have made a mistake. I don’t think I can be a wizard”” (SS 72). Harry does not grasp the magnitude of his abilities and does not know how to handle the sudden news. Voldemort, however, wants to stand out and uses his strange powers to torture others in the orphanage. With these similar beginnings, the two embark on individual journeys whose result varies greatly. Harry, after observing Riddle's childhood, views him with an understanding he never before experienced. These encounters make Voldemort less monstrous to Harry while reaffirming in Harry's mind that Voldemort can be stopped.

As Harry's understanding of his connection to Voldemort deepens, he begins to have concerns that the two might have more of a connection than he realizes. In Harry's encounter with Voldemort at the end of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, he is provided with more detail on the connection between his and Voldemort's wand.

Dumbledore explains to Harry that both he and Voldemort's wand share the same core—a phoenix feather out of the tail of Dumbledore's phoenix, Fawkes—and that “They will not work properly against each other” (GOF 697). Once Voldemort realizes this, he sets out for the Elder wand, the only wand that will defeat either of their two brother wands.

Dumbledore also delves into Harry's connection to Voldemort when he discusses Harry's scar in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*,

“Yes,” said Dumbledore apologetically. “Yes, but you see—it is necessary to start with your scar. For it became apparent, shortly after you rejoined the magical world, that I was correct, and that your scar was giving you warnings when Voldemort was close to you, or else feeling powerful emotions” (OOTP 827).

Harry’s ability to detect Voldemort’s feelings become more pronounced once Voldemort returns to full power. Dumbledore describes to Harry the truth he already knows but has been unwilling to admit. He continues to explain to Harry his reasons for the

Occlumency lessons with Professor Snape as a tool for Harry to use against Voldemort,

“Sirius told me that you felt Voldemort awake inside you the very night that you had the vision of Arthur Weasley’s attack. I know at once that my worst fears were correct: Voldemort from that point had realized he could use you. In an attempt to arm you against Voldemort’s assaults on your mind, I arranged Occlumency lessons with Professor Snape.”

(OOTP 828)

Dumbledore hopes to protect Harry from Voldemort by helping Harry learn how to block his thoughts from others. As the series progresses from this point, Harry becomes acutely aware of his connections to Voldemort and the danger it poses to the people in his life.

Courtney B. Strimel, in “The Politics of Terror: Rereading Harry Potter,” echoes Harry’s concerns about Voldemort’s ability to possess his thoughts, potentially rendering him incapable of controlling his actions “Perhaps the only issue that is scarier than fearing the terrifying actions of others is the fearing of the actions of one’s self” (50). Voldemort’s

awareness that he is able to use the connection between the two heightens Harry's defenses against his enemy.

Throughout Harry's journeys, his heightened awareness of his powers and his similarities to Voldemort cause concern. As is indicated in events throughout the series, the extent of his connection to Voldemort is beyond his control. Though he defies any signal of an awareness of Voldemort's thoughts, his actions and the information he is able to observe because of the connection prove essential in Voldemort's defeat. In *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, Harry's fear is evident when he speaks to Dumbledore and receives timely advice,

Unless I'm much mistaken, [Voldemort] transferred some of his own power to you the night he gave you the scar... You happen to have many qualities Salazar Slytherin prized in his hand-picked students... Yet the Sorting Hat placed you in Gryffindor... Which makes you *very different* from Tom Riddle. It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities. (COS 332-333)

Harry's choices indicate that he, unlike Voldemort, does not choose to follow the Dark Arts for the purpose of self-preservation, causing others pain and obliterating goodness from the world. Voldemort fears death and in his journey to return to power obliterates anything and anyone that stands in his way. In "Generic Fusion and the Mosaic of Harry Potter" Anne Heibert Alton describes Voldemort as one who "has quite literally risen from the dead to become a malevolent figure who is larger than life" (158). He has no desire to return to the form he once was and will avoid death at any cause. Voldemort's

exchange with Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* exhibits his need to avoid death,

“You do not seek to kill me, Dumbledore?” called Voldemort, his scarlet eyes narrowed over the top of his shield. “Above such brutality, are you?”

“We both know that there are other ways of destroying a man, Tom,”

Dumbledore said calmly, continuing to walk toward Voldemort as though he had not a fear in the world, as though nothing had happened to interrupt his stroll up the hall. “Merely taking your life would not satisfy me, I admit—”

“There is nothing worse than death, Dumbledore!” snarled Voldemort.

“You are quite wrong,” said Dumbledore... “Indeed, your failure to understand that there are things much worse than death has always been your greatest weakness—” (OOTP 814)

Not only does the conversation between Dumbledore and Voldemort illustrate Voldemort’s fear of death, but indicates a weakness in his character. Voldemort is focused on maintaining his life and does not see that his choices have created an enemy able to bring about his defeat and his death. His avoidance of the possibility of death blinds him to the fact that Harry has the power to defeat him and prevail. Harry, unlike Voldemort, enters each challenge understanding death and putting himself in the path of potential demise. He avoids fear of death and fully embraces life and love, neither of which Voldemort ever does. By facing this possibility, Harry is given the opportunity to choose to return and end Voldemort life and his ability to cause terror to those who do

not follow his lead. He acts selflessly and is rewarded while Voldemort's selfish nature and inability to observe the picture in its entirety results in his defeat.

In *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, Harry has a conversation with Sirius about the presence of good and evil in the world. Sirius, because of his experiences and his exposure to both good and evil, imparts some of his knowledge onto Harry. He is aware, personally through his own family relations and through his sufferings at Azkaban, that not all people are all or nothing, good or evil. In their conversation, Sirius explains to Harry that both good and evil exist, but labeling one as purely good or evil is a complex task, "'the world isn't split into good people and Death Eaters,' said Sirius with a wry smile" (OOTP 302). Sirius makes clear that good and evil exist, but that people make choices and the choices themselves determine their degree of good or evil. Sirius wants to make Harry aware that people are not wholly good or wholly evil; it is their actions and their motivations behind their choices that indicate the extent of their propensity for either evil or good. Harry has made choices on the side of good, distinguishing himself from Voldemort.

In "Wizardly Challenges to and Affirmation of the Initiation Paradigm in *Harry Potter*" Deborah DeRosa explores Harry's ability to choose the side of good over the side of evil. She writes, "Although attention to external behaviors serves as a valid way to shape one's identity, Harry must discern whether he is fundamentally courageous and good or manipulative and evil" (174). Rowling explores the idea that people have the ability to choose either evil or good while maintaining an awareness and responsibility of the results of these choices. Harry has chosen to align himself with good and not evil regardless of his early experiences. At a young age, Harry suffers the catastrophic

murder of his parents and bears a tremendous weight on his shoulders. Instead of becoming the hero he is, Harry could easily have chosen to utilize his powers for evil and not for good by seeking revenge upon the world. Voldemort also suffers but does not react as Harry does. Voldemort becomes entranced with the notion of obtaining ultimate power and chooses his decisions on the side of evil. He also, as explained previously, has a fear of death and harms any who tries to impede his quest. Harry is aware of his role in the overall scheme, and unlike Voldemort, understands that there are much worse things than death.

Voldemort's choice to kill Lily and James Potter created a connection with Harry that brings about his eventual demise. In the first four books of the series, Harry fights to keep Voldemort at bay, rendering him unable to regain his full physical strength. A shift occurs at the end of *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, when Harry provides the blood that effectually returns Voldemort to his full strength,

“He said my blood would make him stronger than if he'd used someone else's,” Harry told Dumbledore. “He said the protection my—my mother left in me—he'd have it too. And he was right—he could touch me without hurting himself, he touched my face.”

For a fleeting instant, Harry thought he saw a gleam of something like triumph in Dumbledore's eyes. But next second, Harry was sure he imagined it, for when Dumbledore had returned to his seat behind the desk, he looked as old and as weary as Harry had ever seen him. (GOF 696)

Once Harry and Voldemort's wands connected, their linked cores reacted, rendering each wand incapable of working properly against the other. Dumbledore's gleam, as Rowling writes, indicates triumph because of Harry's win and because he knows that Voldemort's wand cannot overpower Harry's. Harry's focus shifts once he becomes aware of Voldemort's return. He is no longer fighting a less than perfect replica of what Voldemort once was. Harry must face the most powerful Dark Wizard in at least a generation if not all time that no longer appears by possessing the weak wizard Quirrell or as a memory preserved in a diary. Once Harry's blood assists in Voldemort's "resurrection," he becomes the fully formed, physical version of himself ready to take back the power he believes to be his.

There is no clear dividing line between the aspects of good and evil in the *Harry Potter* series. Harry is the archetypal hero who battles the evil villain Lord Voldemort. The plot begins long before the first page of the novel because of the past battle between Lord Voldemort and Harry's parents, James and Lily Potter. Voldemort chooses to destroy others as a way to prolong his life as he regains his strength, while Harry chooses to place others before his own safety. By the final book in the series, Harry evolves into the role of a hero and understands his role in the overall picture. Rowling builds on the final confrontation between Harry and Lord Voldemort, indicating that the destruction of one will only happen with the death of the other. Harry is aware of this, as he recalls Professor Trelawney's prophesy:

THE ONE WITH THE POWER TO VANQUISH THE DARK LORD
APPROACHES...BORN TO THOSE WHO HAVE THRICE DEFIED
HIM, BORN AS THE SEVENTH MONTH DIES...AND THE DARK

LORD WILL MARK HIM AS HIS EQUAL, BUT HE WILL HAVE
 POWER THE DARK LORD KNOWS NOT...AND EITHER MUST DIE
 AT THE HAND OF THE OTHER FOR NEITHER CAN LIVE WHILE
 THE OTHER SURVIVES...THE ONE WITH THE POWER TO
 VANQUISH THE DARK LORD WILL BE BORN AS THE SEVENTH
 MONTH DIES. (Emphasis original OOTP 841)

Harry knows of the challenge he must face as he seeks to obliterate Voldemort. He is also aware that in this final confrontation he might meet his own death. In one of his last conversations with Dumbledore, Harry learns of his own inner strength and purity and of his vast differences from Voldemort as Dumbledore explains Voldemort's role in setting the prophecy in motion. Voldemort himself is responsible for instilling in Harry the power of defeat. Again, looking to *MacBeth*, Voldemort's actions caused the prophecy to come true,

"If Voldemort had never heard of the prophecy, would it have been fulfilled? Would it have meant anything? Of course not! Do you think that every prophecy in the Hall of Prophecy has been fulfilled?"

"But," said Harry, bewildered, "but last year you said that one of us would have to kill the other—"

"Harry, Harry, only because Voldemort made a grave error, and acted on Professor Trelawney's words! If Voldemort had never murdered your father, would he have imparted in you a furious desire for revenge? Of course not! If he had not forced your mother to die for you, would he have given you a magical protection he could not penetrate? Of course

not, Harry! Don't you see? Voldemort himself created his worst enemy, just as tyrants everywhere do! Have you any idea how tyrants fear the people they oppress? All of them realize that, one day, amongst their many victims, there is sure to be one who rises against them and strikes back! Voldemort is no different! Always he was on the lookout for the one who would challenge him. He heard the prophecy and he leapt into action, with the result that he not only handpicked the man most likely to finish him, he handed him uniquely deadly weapons!" (HBP 510)

In Voldemort's quest for power, he failed to see that Harry would be his eventual end. His greed for power and his relentless need for immortality blinded him from the opponent he created. Dumbledore emphasizes this to Harry as a warning and as a final lesson,

"It is essential that you understand this!" said Dumbledore, standing up and striding around the room, his glittering robes swooshing in his wake; Harry had never seen him so agitated. "By attempting to kill you, Voldemort himself singled out the remarkable person who sits here in front of me, and gave him the tools for the job! It is Voldemort's fault that you were able to see into his thoughts, his ambitions, that you even understand the snakelike language in which he gives orders, and yet, Harry, despite your privileged insight into Voldemort's world (which, incidentally, is a gift any Death Eater would kill to have), you have never been seduced by the Dark Arts, never, even for a second, shown the slightest desire to become one of Voldemort's followers!" (DH 510-511)

Dumbledore reassures Harry that, though capable of similar power as Voldemort, he has never once sought to align himself with evil. This encourages Harry and assures him that—though connected—he shares no similarity to Voldemort in his choices,

“You are protected, in short, by your ability to love!” said Dumbledore loudly. “The only protection that can possibly work against the lure of power like Voldemort’s! In spite of all the temptation you have endured, all the suffering, you remain pure of heart, just as pure as you were at the age of eleven, when you stared into a mirror that reflected your heart’s desire, and it showed you only the way to thwart Lord Voldemort, and not immortality or riches. Harry, Have you any idea how few wizards could have seen what you saw in the mirror? Voldemort should have known then what he was dealing with, but he did not.” (DH 511)

In this conversation, Dumbledore seeks to assure Harry that he is unlike Voldemort in his desire to prevail. Though equal in their magical ability, they do not share an identical goal. Casey A. Cothran, in “Lessons in Transfiguration: Allegories of Male Identity in Rowling’s *Harry Potter* Series” describes Voldemort as “the embodiment of [his] violent tradition, growing in strength as he drains others of their power” (128). Voldemort acts out against others in a selfish attempt to save himself from harm while Harry acts in the opposite manner. Dumbledore, who seeks to reassure Harry, confirms that Harry has the ability to make the choice to defeat Voldemort. Though both characters seek to defeat the other, Harry chooses to continue to fight for unselfish reasons and to end Voldemort’s ability to cause pain and destruction.

Though enormous speculation surrounded the resolution of Book 7, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Rowling brought successful closure to the ongoing battle between Harry and Lord Voldemort. The tone of the concluding text varies from the previous six, as Harry is ultimately the one who must face his enemy and risk his life to save the Wizarding World. Harry must decide whether to surrender to Voldemort's demand to meet, or to continue to fight and risk his fellow friends, teachers, and those who have become his family. Harry flees to the safety of Dumbledore's office, observes a portion of Snape's memories, and learns of a plan long set in motion. Dumbledore, before his death, asks Snape to explain to Harry, when the time comes, the reason for their connection and the reason behind Harry's role in the destruction of Voldemort's power. Dumbledore explains: the night Voldemort made an attempt on his life; Lily Potter placed herself between her child and Voldemort, reflecting the Killing Curse onto Lord Voldemort. Because of this, a portion of Voldemort's soul sought a living body and attached itself to Harry. Part of Voldemort's soul exists within Harry; until that part is destroyed, Voldemort can never die. Hearing Dumbledore speak this truth propels Harry into action. He realizes his role in the final confrontation and decides to meet Voldemort head on,

Lying with his face pressed into the dusty carpet of the office where he had once thought he was learning the secrets of victory, Harry understood at last that he was not supposed to survive. His job was to walk calmly into Death's welcoming arms. Along the way, he was to dispose of Voldemort's remaining links to life, so that when at last he flung himself across Voldemort's path, and did not raise a wand to defend himself, the

end would be clean, and the job that ought to have been done in Godric's Hollow would be finished: Neither would live, neither could survive.

(DH 691)

The information that Harry learns while in Dumbledore's office clarifies any confusion he might have had as to his role in the overall process. Knowing now that he must sacrifice himself in order to stop Voldemort, Harry makes the decision to return to the forest. He does not understand, however, how he can prevail when one Horcrux remains. Regardless of his confusion, Harry is now aware that he must give of himself, a concept foreign to Voldemort.

In the confrontation scene in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, Harry rises above his fear and confronts Voldemort with what proves to be a pivotal choice,

"I thought he would come," said Voldemort in his high, clear voice, his eyes on the leaping flames. "I expected him to come."

Nobody spoke. They seemed as scared as Harry, whose heart was now throwing itself against his ribs as though determined to escape the body he was about to cast aside. His hands were sweating as he pulled off the Invisibility Cloak and stuffed it beneath his robes, with his wand. He did not want to be tempted to fight.

"I was, it seems...mistaken," said Voldemort.

"You weren't."

Harry said it as loudly as he could, with all the force he could muster: He did not want to sound afraid. The Resurrection Stone slipped from beneath his numb fingers, and out of the corner of his eyes he saw his

parents, Sirius, and Lupin vanish as he stepped forward into the firelight.

At that moment he felt that nobody mattered but Voldemort. It was just the two of them. (DH 703)

Harry's decision represents a sacrifice for the greater good. He has suffered the loss of his parents and many of his friends and feels that his only option is to allow his death to occur. Acting out of the knowledge obtained in Voldemort's office, Harry allows Voldemort to attack him without fighting back. It is through this action that Harry permits Voldemort to destroy the part of his soul residing within Harry. However, while attempting to destroy Harry, Voldemort destroys the part of himself that exists within Harry, leaving Harry's soul completely his own. When he fails to defend himself against Voldemort, realizing that he must be destroyed in order to destroy his enemy, Harry enters a dream-like state and sees Dumbledore and a small, whimpering form of a child lying under a chair. Surprised, he thinks himself dead, but is reassured by Dumbledore that the is not,

"But..." Harry raised his hand instinctively toward the lightning scar. It did not seem to be there. "But I should have died—I didn't defend myself! I meant to let him kill me!"

"And that," said Dumbledore, "will, I think, have made all the difference."
(DH 707-708)

Harry's choice to face death allows him to take back his own life, destroying the portion of Voldemort's soul existing within his own. Dumbledore describes Harry's sacrifice as something completely unfamiliar to Voldemort. The act itself allows Harry to return to the fight and challenge Voldemort. Dumbledore informs Harry that he, himself, is the

last Horcrux made by Voldemort. Allowing Voldemort to destroy him without fighting back provides Harry with the chance to break loose from the portion of Voldemort's soul existing within his own. Dumbledore assures Harry that to return to the fight will provide strength to those who remain behind, "Do not pity the dead, Harry. Pity the living, and, above all, those who live without love. By returning, you may ensure that fewer souls are maimed, fewer families are torn apart. If that seems to you a worthy goal, then we say good-bye for the present" (DH 722). Dumbledore informs Harry that he has the option of not returning to battle, that he can simply get on the next train. He makes Harry aware that if his choice is to return to the battle, he will be able to save many. Continuing in the role of the hero, Harry makes a selfless choice to return and to place others safety before his own.

Entering into his last battle with Voldemort, Harry focuses all of his heroic energies on defeating his enemy. The dual nature between them provides Harry with the ability to challenge his shadow side and prevail. Harry becomes the ultimate hero in his sacrifice for others. At Voldemort's behest, the two battle on skill alone, and turn to their most familiar spells to win against their opponent,

"Avada Kedavra!"

"Expellairmus!"

The bang was like a cannon blast, and the golden flames that erupted between them, at the dead center of the circle they had been treading, marked the point where the spells collided. Harry saw Voldemort's green jet meet his own spell, saw the Elder Wand fly high, dark against the sunrise, spinning across enchanted ceiling like the head of Nagini,

spinning through the air toward the master it would not kill, who had come to take full possession of it at last. And Harry, with the unerring skill of the Seeker, caught the wand in his free hand as Voldemort fell backward, arms splayed, the slit pupils of his scarlet eyes rolling upward. Tom Riddle hit the floor with a mundane finality, his body feeble and shrunken, the white hands empty, the snakelike face vacant and unknowing.

Voldemort was dead, killed by his own rebounding curse, and Harry stood with two wands in his hand, staring down at his enemy's shell. (DH 743-744)

Harry opted to use his most familiar spell, the disarming spell, as his tool to defeat Voldemort. The spell, one of his first, is simple and does not inflict pain or harm. Harry's choice of spells is not one that causes murder or destruction, but that renders the opponent defenseless. Voldemort also chose to use his most basic and familiar spell, *Avada Kedavra*, to kill his opponent. Death is familiar to Voldemort and his choice is indicative of his inner need to destroy others as a way to prevent his own destruction. Harry's ability to master the Elder Wand allowed him to block the killing curse and turn it back on its creator, completing the circle Voldemort began when he attempted to take Harry's life as an infant, and instead created the one who would bring about his eventual demise. Ultimately, Voldemort's desire for power and his attempt to destroy those obstructing his path to glory cause his defeat. As Dumbledore explains, Voldemort sets the prophecy in motion by acting against Harry and his parents, selfishly trying to obliterate a problem and subsequently creating his worst problem—Harry Potter. Once connected through Voldemort's attempt on his life, Harry and Voldemort share emotions,

thoughts, and the ability to cause potential harm. For Harry, his connection to Voldemort plays a pivotal role during the course of the series, and enables him to meet his enemy head on and prevail.

The line between Harry and Voldemort, good and evil, often becomes unclear. Many readers observe good and evil as opposing forces and do not realize their co-dependent nature. Characters vying for power remain interested in the progression, or lack thereof, of the character they oppose. In J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, Harry and Voldemort share joint existence as two sides of the same issue, one representing good with the other representing evil. Both Harry and Voldemort share a chosen side of good or evil, but have the ability to counteract each other's behavior through the results of their choices. Harry's actions are a result of attempts to prevent Voldemort from returning to power and vie on the side of good. His decisions denote recognition of his connection to an evil force, but also a conscious choice to act against evil. Voldemort makes decisions selfishly as a way to avoid death, and aligns his actions with the side of evil. Because of Voldemort's attempt on Harry's life, neither can control the connection they have and both seek to destroy the other as a way to achieve victory. Through the actions of Harry Potter and Lord Voldemort, Rowling creates a work whose main theme is the dual nature of the conflict between good and evil. Rowling finalizes her narrative with Harry sacrificing himself to save others. Harry's self-sacrifice allows him to return and defeat his opponent, leaving Voldemort powerless. Voldemort is unable to understand his opponent's willingness to die for others, and cannot retaliate. Harry Potter employs strength of character and makes choices worthy of a hero to overcome the evil

Lord Voldemort represents. Their cyclical relationship ends when Harry faces his own death and is ultimately able to prevail.

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